

John Elias Baldacci
Governor



State of Maine
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011

To: MaineCare Electronic Billing Providers

From: Christine Gianopoulos, Acting Director, Bureau of Medical Services

Re: Electronic Claims Submission to MaineCare - HIPAA Formats

Date: December 1, 2004

As you know, the Administrative Simplification Transaction Standards associated with HIPAA went into effect October 16, 2003. These standards required changes to the file formats used to communicate electronically between providers and MaineCare.

The Bureau of Medical Services is pleased to announce that **MECMS**, the web-based HIPAA compliant electronic claims management system is now scheduled to be implemented in late January 2005. **MECMS** will provide increased functionality for providers with an Internet connection to enter and submit claims electronically.

Until the **MECMS** system goes live in late January 2005, HIPAA transmissions will not be supported and BMS will continue to process claims with the existing system using the current EMC process, file, and transmission formats. Providers currently billing electronically are encouraged to continue using their existing processes.

If you are unable to continue using the current EMC transmission format, you may submit your claims via paper or contact Paul Collins at 287-5102 to develop further contingency plans.

Please continue to check our web site <http://www.maine.gov/bms> and click on [News](#) for updated information and production dates.

We appreciate your continued patience and support as we approach the implementation of the **MECMS** system. With your cooperation we can realize our vision for a more efficient electronic claims processing system.

On the back of this notice, you will find HIPAA related information necessary to make your system MECMS compatible.

Changes Necessary for Submission of Claims to MECMS

Remittance Advice (RA) Notification Changes

Providers submitting electronic claims can receive RA information electronically from MECMS. This information will be provided via a HIPAA compliant 835-transmission file. This file will be available on the MECMS web site for providers to download at their convenience. RA information will also be sent to providers via a paper mailing when MECMS is first deployed. BMS will decide after MECMS is completely implemented if this paper distribution will continue.

File Format Changes

EMC Transmissions

BMS plans to continue accepting electronic claims in the current EMC format after the HIPAA deadline and for some time after MECMS implementation. This format is referred to as an EMC transmission. The instructions for using the EMC format, in addition to the record layout, can be found at: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/emc/emc-downloads.htm>.

The EMC format is not HIPAA compliant. Providers who continue to submit in this format are in violation of the HIPAA compliance guidelines. However, BMS recognizes that a transition period may be necessary after MECMS is implemented, so this format will be supported for an unspecified time while providers become compliant. All providers submitting claims electronically must eventually implement a HIPAA compliant transmission.

HIPAA Transmissions

HIPAA compliant 837 transmissions will be accepted by the MECMS system. However, submission files must be tested prior to providers submitting them. Unfortunately, the testing capability will be implemented with MECMS, so testing will not be available until a few weeks after MECMS implementation. Instructions for using this HIPAA Transmission format, in addition to the record layout, can be found at: <http://cms.hhs.gov/providers/edi/hipaadoc.asp>

File Naming Conventions

In the past, electronic claims for all providers were processed as one large file. Because of this, all providers used the same file name when submitting claims. In order to provide better individual service to providers through MECMS, each provider's file must have a name that uniquely identifies the provider and the type of record format.

The new file naming convention will consist of two variable components and end with the extension **.DAT**. The first component will be the base provider ID number. This is the ID number ending in 00. The second component will be a transmission type identifier, which will be **H** for a HIPAA transmission and **E** for an EMC transmission. For example, a provider with a billing ID of 123456700 who submits a HIPAA transmission would use **123456700H.DAT** as a filename. A provider with a provider ID of 987654300 who submits an EMC transmission would use **987654300E.DAT** as a file name.

Clearinghouses/Billing Agencies shall substitute their billing ID for the provider ID in the naming convention.